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WHAT TO DO IN THE MEANTIME?

It has been frequently remarked by a philosopher of our acquaintance, whose only fault is impracticability, that in life there is but one real difficulty: this is simply—what to do in the meantime? The thesis requires no demonstration. It comes home to the experience of every man who hears it uttered. From the chimney-pots to the cellars of society, great and small, scholars and clowns, all classes of struggling humanity are painfully alive to its truth.

The men to whom the question is pre-eminently embarrassing are those who have either pecuniary expectancies or possess talents of some particular kind, on whose recognition by others their material prosperity depends. It may be laid down as a general axiom in such cases, that the worst thing a man can do is to *wait*, and the best thing he can do is to *work*; that is to say, that in nine cases out of ten, doing something has a great advantage over doing nothing. Such an assertion would appear a mere obvious truism, and one requiring neither proof nor illustration, were it not grievously palpable to the student of the great book of life—the unwritten biographical dictionary of the world—that an opposite system is too often preferred and adopted by the unfortunate victims of this 'condition-of-everybody question,' so clearly proposed, and in countless instances so inefficiently and indefinitely answered.

To multiply dismal examples of such sad cases of people ruined, starved, and in a variety of ways fearfully embarrassed and tormented during the process of expectation, by the policy of cowardly sloth or feeble hesitation, might indeed 'point a moral,' but would scarcely 'adorn a tale.' It is doubtless an advantage to know how to avoid errors, but it is decidedly a much greater advantage to learn practical truth. We shall therefore leave the dark side of the argument with full confidence to the memories, experience, and imaginations of our readers, and dwell rather—as both a more salutary and interesting consideration—on the brighter side, in cases of successful repartee to the grand query, which our limited personal observation has enabled us to collect. Besides, there is nothing attractive or exciting about intellectual inertia. The contrast between active resistance and passive endurance is that between a machine at rest and a machine in motion. Who that has visited the Great Exhibition can have failed to remark the difference of interest aroused in the two cases? What else causes the perambulating dealers in artificial spiders suspended from threads to command so great a patronage from the juvenile population of Paris and London? What

else constitutes the superiority of an advertising van over a stationary poster? What sells Alexandre Dumas's novels, and makes a balloon ascent such a favourite spectacle? 'Work, man!' said the philosopher: 'hast thou not all eternity to rest in?' And to *work*, according to Mill's 'Political Economy,' is to *move*; therefore perpetual motion is the great ideal problem of mechanicians.

The first case in our museum is that of a German officer. He was sent to the coast of Africa on an exploring expedition, through the agency of the *parti prêtre*, or Jesuit party in France, with whose machinations against Louis-Philippe's government he had become accidentally acquainted. The Jesuits, finding him opposed to their plans, determined to remove him from the scene of action. In consequence of this determination, it so happened that the captain of the vessel in which he went out set sail one fine morning, leaving our friend on shore to the society and care of the native negro population. His black acquaintances for some time treated him with marked civility; but as the return of the ship became more and more problematical, familiarity began to breed its usual progeny, and the unhappy German found himself in a most painful position. Hitherto he had not been treated with actual disrespect; but when King Bocca-Bocca one day cut him in the most unequivocal manner, he found himself so utterly neglected, that the sensation of being a nobody—a nobody too amongst niggers!—for the moment completely overcame him. A feeble ray of hope was excited shortly afterwards in his despondent heart by a hint gathered from the signs made by the negro in whose hut he lived, that a project was entertained in high quarters of giving him a coat of lamp-black, and selling him as a slave; but this idea was abandoned by its originators, possibly for want of opportunity to carry it out. Now our adventurer had observed that so long as he had a charge of gunpowder left to give away, the black men had almost worshipped him as an incarnation of the Mumbo-Jumbo adored by their fathers. Reflecting on this, it occurred to him that if, by any possibility, he could contrive to manufacture a fresh supply of the valued commodity, his fortunes would be comparatively secure.

No sooner had this idea arisen in his brain, than, with prodigious perseverance, he proceeded to work towards its realisation. The worst of it was, that he knew the native names neither of charcoal, sulphur, nor nitre. No matter; his stern volition was proof against all difficulties. Having once conveyed his design to the negroes, he found them eager to assist him, though as difficulty after difficulty arose, it required all the confidence of courage and hopeful energy to control their

savage impatience. The first batch was a failure, and it was only by pretending that it was yet unfinished he was enabled to try a second, in which he triumphed over all obstacles. When the negroes had really loaded their muskets with his powder, and fired them off in celebration of the event, they indeed revered the stranger as a superior and marvellous being. For nearly eighteen months the German remained on the coast. It was a port rarely visited, and the negroes would not allow him to make any attempt to travel to a more frequented place. Thus he continued to make gunpowder for his barbarous friends, and to live, according to their notions, 'like a prince;' for to do King Bocca-Bocca justice, when he learned our friend's value, he treated him like a man and a brother. What might have been his fate had he awaited in idle despondency the arrival of a vessel? As it was, the negroes crowded the beach, and fired off repeated salvos at his departure. Doubtless his name will descend through many a dusky generation as the teacher of that art which they still practise, carrying on a lucrative commerce in gunpowder with the neighbouring tribes. A small square chest of gold-dust, which the escaped victim of Jesuit fraud brought back to Europe, was no inappropriate proof of the policy of doing something 'in the meantime,' while waiting, however anxiously, to do something else.

We knew another case in point, also connected with the late king of the French. M. de G— was, on the downfall of that monarch, in possession of a very handsome pension for past services. The revolution came, and his pension was suspended. His wife was a woman of energy: she saw that the pension might be recovered by making proper representations in the right quarters; but she also saw that ruinous embarrassment and debt might accrue in the interim. Her house was handsomely furnished—she had been brought up in the lap of wealth and luxury. She did not hesitate; she turned her house into a lodging-house, sank the pride of rank, attended to all the duties of such a station, and—what was the result? When, at the end of three years, M. de G— recovered his pension, he owed nobody a farthing, and the arrears sufficed to dower one of his daughters about to marry a gentleman of large fortune, who had become acquainted with her by lodging in their house. Mme de G—'s fashionable friends thought her conduct very shocking. But what might have become of the family in three years of petitioning?

Again: one of our most intimate acquaintance was an English gentleman, who, having left the army at the instance of a rich father-in-law, had the misfortune subsequently to offend the irascible old gentleman so utterly, that the latter suddenly withdrew his allowance of £1,000 per annum, and left our friend to shift for himself. His own means, never very great, were entirely exhausted. He knew too well the impracticable temper of his father-in-law to waste time in attempting to soften him. He also knew that by his wife's settlement he should be rich at the death of the old man, who had already passed his seventieth year. He could not borrow money, for he had been severely wounded in Syria, and the insurance-offices refused him: but he felt a spring of life and youth within him that mocked their calculations. He took things cheerfully, and resolved to work for his living. He answered unnumbered advertisements, and made incessant applications for all sorts of situations. At length matters came to a crisis: his money was nearly gone; time pressed: his wife and child must be supported. A seat—not in parliament, but on the box of an omnibus was offered him. He accepted it. The pay was equivalent to three guineas a week. It was hard work; but he stuck to it manfully. Not unfrequently it was his lot to drive gentlemen who had dined at his table and drunk his wine in former days. He never blushed

at their recognition: he thought working easier than begging. For nearly ten years he endured all the ups and downs of omnibus life. At last the tough old father-in-law, who during the whole interval had never relented, died; and our hero came into the possession of some £1500 a year, which he enjoys at this present moment. Suppose he had borrowed and drawn bills instead of working during those ten years, as many have done who had expectancies before them, where would he have been on his exit from the Queen's Bench at the expiration of the period? In the hands of the Phillistines, or of the Jews?

Our next specimen is that of a now successful author, who, owing to the peculiarity of his style, fell, notwithstanding a rather dashing *debut*, into great difficulty and distress. His family withdrew all support, because he abandoned the more regular prospects of the legal profession for the more ambitious but less certain career of literature. He felt that he had the stuff in him to make a popular writer; but he was also compelled to admit that popularity was not in his case to be the work of a day. The *res angusta domi* grew closer and closer; and though not objecting to dispense with the supposed necessity of dining, he felt that bread and cheese, in the literal acceptance of the term, were really indispensable to existence. Hence, one day, he invested his solitary half-crown in the printing of a hundred cards, announcing that at the 'Classical and Commercial Day-school of Mr —, &c., Young Gentlemen were instructed in all the Branches, &c., for the moderate sum of Two Shillings weekly.' These cards he distributed by the agency of the milkman in the suburban and somewhat poor neighbourhood, in which he occupied a couple of rooms at the moderate rent of 7s. weekly. It was not long before a few pupils made, one by one, their appearance at the would-be pedagogue's. As they were mostly the sons of petty tradesmen round about, he raised no objection to taking out their schooling in kind, and by this means earned at least a subsistence till more prosperous times arrived, and publishers discovered his latent merits. But for this device, he might not improbably have shared the fate of Chatterton and others, less unscrupulous as to a resource for the 'meantime'—that rock on which so many an embryo genius founders.

The misfortune of our next case was, not that he abandoned the law, but that the law abandoned him. He was a solicitor in a country town, where the people were either so little inclined to litigation, or so happy in not finding cause for it, that he failed from sheer want of clients, and, as a natural consequence, betook himself to the metropolis—that Mecca *cum* Medina of all desperate pilgrims in search of fickle Fortune. There his only available friend was a pastrycook in a large way of business. It so happened that the man of tarts and jellies was precisely at that epoch in want of a foreman and book-keeper, his last prime-minister having emigrated to America with a view to a more independent career. Our ex-lawyer, feeling the consumption of tarts to be more immediately certain than the demand for writs, proposed, to his friend's amazement, for the vacant post; and so well did he fill it, that in a few years he had saved enough of money to start again in his old profession. The pastrycook and his friends became clients, and he is at present a thriving attorney in Lincoln's Inn, none the worse a lawyer for a practical knowledge of the *pâtés* filled by those oysters whose shells are the proverbial heritage of his patrons.

A still more singular resource was that of a young gentleman, of no particular profession, who having disposed somehow or other in unprofitable speculations of a very moderate inheritance, found himself what is technically termed 'on his beam-ends;' so much so, indeed, that his condition gradually came to verge on positive destitution; and he sat disconsolately in a

little garret one morning, quite at his wits' end for the means of contriving what Goethe facetiously called 'the delightful habit of existing.' Turning over his scanty remains of clothes and other possessions, in the vain hope of lighting upon something of a marketable character, he suddenly took up a sheet of card-board which in happier days he had destined for the sketches at which he was an indifferent adept. He had evidently formed a plan, however absurd: that was plain from the odd smile which irradiated his features. He descended the stairs to borrow of his landlady—what? A shilling?—By no means. A needle and thread, and a pair of scissors. Then he took out his box of water-colours and set to work. To design a picture?—Not a bit of it: to make dancing-dolls!—Yes, the man without a profession had found a trade. By the time it was dusk he had made several figures with movable legs and arms: one bore a rude resemblance to Napoleon; another, with scarcely excusable licence, represented the Pope; a third held the very devil up to ridicule; and a fourth bore a hideous resemblance to the grim King of Terrors himself! They were but rude productions as works of art; but there was a spirit and expression about them that toyshops rarely exhibit. The ingenious manufacturer then sallied forth with his merchandise. Within an hour afterwards he might have been seen driving a bargain with a vagrant dealer in 'odd notions,' as the Yankees would call them. It is unnecessary to pursue our artist through all his industrial progress. Enough that he is now one of the most successful theatrical machinists, and in the possession of a wife, a house, and a comfortable income. He, too, had prospects, and he still has them—as far off as ever. Fortunately for him, he 'prospected' on his own account, and found a 'diggin'.

There is always something to be done if people will only set about finding it out, and the chances are ever in favour of activity. Whatever brings a man in contact with his fellows may lead to fortune. Every day brings new opportunities to the social worker; and no man, if he has once seriously considered the subject, need ever be at a loss as to what to do in the meantime. Volition is primitive motion, and where there is a will there is a way.

ACADEMICAL EXPENSES.

THE public press has lately been putting forth some strong remarks upon the subject of the expenses of an English university education. The particular period selected for their publication has been well chosen, being the commencement of the academic year, and with regard to the topic, few could be selected of more universal interest. To a vast number of persons, ranging from the middle-classes up to the nobles of the land, Oxford and Cambridge are endeared by personal acquaintance, and by all the nameless ties which bind a student to *alma mater*; to a large section of the talented and aspiring portion of the rising generation, they are the theatre to which they look forward for distinction and fame; and what is more important than all, they are the chief nursing-places of those whose influence for good or for evil is enhanced by the prestige which belongs to an educated clergyman, whose character and opinions are looked up to by many as a standard of correctness and orthodoxy.

An able article of the *Times* comes to the conclusion, that the university and college officials stand blameless, and that the debts and difficulties into which so many fall are to be attributed solely to the folly of the student. The *Daily News* takes precisely the opposite opinion. But as neither party gives more than a general outline of the case, it has struck us that a candid statement of the real position of the student will not be altogether uninteresting; and we may add, that those into whose hands this may fall may rest assured that its information

is based upon personal knowledge, and actuated by neither partisanship nor antagonism.

The course of study at Oxford extends over a period varying from three and a half to four and a half years; at Cambridge, except under the special excuse of sickness, the examination which terminates the curriculum takes place three years and a half after entrance. The apparently longer residence required by Oxford is rendered still longer by a larger portion of the year being given to the university than is required at Cambridge, for the 'men' of the latter university go 'down' for the long vacation at or about the 1st of June, and do not return until late in October; while at Oxford almost the whole of June is spent in residence, and the colleges open earlier in October there than at Cambridge. Living is also a shade or two cheaper at Cambridge; so that comparing the cheapest college of one with the cheapest of the other, and taking into account the different length of residence required, the popular notion regarding the higher expenses of Oxford may be assumed to be a true one.

This point being settled, we come to the inquiry: What is the expense of a university education? Now it is evident that this will vary according to the varying taste, if not according to the pockets of the student. One may delight in driving tandem, in wearing extensive waistcoats and voluminous ties; another may aspire, with the aid of a few sovereigns, or the credit of them, to be the choicest spirit, and give the most 'spicy' wines of his college; while a third may satisfy himself with spending as little, living as quietly, and reading as hard as possible. Of course all these will give us different answers, and we shall be as far from a solution of our question as ever. The only way is to endeavour to gather from some authentic source the amount actually demanded by the college and university, and to add for private expenses as near an approximation to the true and necessary amount as possible. Now for the former we are happily well provided in an 'Account of Expenses' calculated on an average for a college at Cambridge, where of course we look for the minimum charge—and published in the *Cambridge Calendar* by authority. Here it is:—

Annual Expenses.

1. Tuition,	L.10 0 0
2. Rooms, Rent,	10 0 0
3. Attendance, Taxes, &c.,	6 5 0
4. Coals,	3 10 0
5. College Payments,	5 7 4
Cost of Living—	
6. Breakfast, Dinner, and Tea—at 16s. 6d. a week for twenty-five weeks,	20 12 6
7. Laundress,	5 8 0
Total,	L.61 2 10

If we examine these items in order, we shall be able to give a better and more systematic idea of the expenses than would otherwise be practicable.

1. *Tuition*.—This includes only the fees of the tutors provided by the college. But for any man who desires high honours in the classical or mathematical department, the condition of the university is such that a private tutor, or, in common parlance, a 'coach,' is absolutely necessary. We are not at present concerned with the right or the wrong of this system; we have only to do with its accompanying expenses. These are L.7 a term* for one hour every other day; L.14 for the same time every day. It is farther to be remarked, that if a tutor is engaged for the Lent term, it is not considered improper to form another engagement for the following 'short' or Easter term, so that the expense is necessarily incurred twice in the early part of the year.

* Three terms at Cambridge correspond to four at Oxford. Private tutors at Oxford consider Easter and Trinity term as one.

2. *Rooms.*—In some colleges this expense is much lower—in fact as low as L.6 a year; in others it reaches to L.40, but of course the inhabiting the latter kind of rooms is by no means a compulsory affair. It will often happen, however, that the college is full; in which case the student is compelled to live in lodgings, of which the rent varies from 10s. upwards—half-price being paid in vacations. It may be observed that at Oxford the same ratio of rent prevails. Very good rooms may be had—for instance, in St John's College—at L.8 a year.

Another consideration must not be forgotten; namely, that these rooms are *unfurnished*. On the arrival of a freshman at his college, the first proceeding is to conduct him round the various sets of rooms from which he may choose. Most of these have been vacated by men who have changed into other rooms; for the right of changing once belonging to every man, the good sets of rooms are generally seized as they become vacant by men already in college, and of some standing, who of course leave their own rooms for new-comers. The freshman, therefore, will most probably be introduced to a dingy apartment, from which hearth-rug, sofa, pictures, arm-chairs, &c., have been removed, and nothing remains except what may be called a room's necessities of life. There may be a carpet, but always in an awfully ragged and torn condition; there may also be the things we have mentioned as absent, though this is improbable; an empty set of book-shelves, a few chairs, a table, a bedstead, and other bedroom furniture, will generally comprise the whole amount of available effects. If he does find rooms already furnished, he may consider himself truly fortunate. For what follows? Suppose the choice made, and a certain room fixed upon—the next proceeding is the valuation of the furniture left, and the determination whether to keep or dismiss each separate article, which is entirely at the student's will. At Oxford—at least in most of the colleges with which we are acquainted—the only liberty allowed is either to take or to reject the whole. This having been done, there remains to supply the deficiencies of the establishment. Crockery, glass, bed-furniture, the aforesaid hearth-rug, and all the paraphernalia of a little house, have to be replaced. And forth accordingly, probably under the guidance of some patronising 'man,' goes the freshman, proud of his new dignity and his independence, and, we grieve to add—as certain to be cheated in his purchases as he is to purchase. But this takes us beyond the limit of the distinct college expense, and for the present we pass on.

3. *Attendance, Taxes.*—At Oxford, with the exception, we believe, of Pembroke College, female-servants are unknown. At Cambridge, without exception, women are the attendants. At Oxford the tribe is divided into scouts and bedmakers; the former of whom attend to the man, and the latter to the man's rooms. At Cambridge the sole servant—with one exception, as we shall explain—is the woman 'bedmaker,' who 'does for' you entirely. There is also a class of men, named Gyps, who will attend upon you for a certain fee; but this is an extra luxury, and the college does not recognise them officially. As to taxes, it may be mentioned that many men keep dogs, and some horses; but the charge of taxes in the college bill is a very unusual one.

4. *Coals.*—Nothing need be said on this item, more than that each man has his private coal-cellar, which is filled weekly.

5. *College Payments.*—These being irrespective of a man's style of living, need no remark. They are included in the bills under such titles as 'Bursar,' 'Lamp on the Stairs,' &c.

6. *Food.*—We come now to a most important element of the bill. Let us see, in the first place, what is meant by this L.20, 12s. 6d., or rather 16s. 6d. a week. The

principal meal of the day is of course dinner, and this is eaten at a common table in the college hall. In fact, dinner is called simply 'hall.' The hour in most colleges at Cambridge is four o'clock—we believe there are only two exceptions to this rule; and the provision in most cases is a supply of several joints of meat to choose from, and potatoes. Bread, beer, pudding, sauce of any kind, soups, fish, &c., are extras. This, then, is the hall dinner, and this must be paid for whether eaten or not. But besides the college sends a certain quantity of butter, bread, and milk per diem to the rooms of each student. And this we take to be all that is calculated for in the average table presented above. It may possibly occur to some readers that tea, coffee, sugar, occasionally a glass of beer and a slice of cheese, would not be too great luxuries. But on this head the above bill must be considered to be silent; for at no college, so far as our information extends, can the sum of 16s. 6d. a week compass such privileges. This naturally leads to a few other remarks upon the provisions of the college for such extras.

There are two divisions of the provisioning department in a Cambridge college: one, the buttery, from whence all things that do not include meats are sent out; the other, the kitchen, to supply the deficiencies of the buttery. In both these offices the order of the student is obeyed implicitly as to sending any amount of provision, and with the exception of no cooking being allowed on Sunday, or after ten at night, or between twelve noon and six p.m. we know of no restricting regulation. Almost every edible and potable, excepting wines and spirits, is sent out from these establishments, and charged at a high rate.

7. *Laundress.*—Washing is allowed to be an inevitable expense. With the exception of one mythical man who we have heard was once caught washing his own stockings, we are not acquainted with any one who has succeeded in evading this reasonable charge. It must be remembered that sheets, towels, blankets, &c., come into this item.

We have now examined, so far as it goes, the statement of expenses put forward as the minimum by the university of Cambridge; and the reader will be enabled to see that, by rigid economy, and by avoiding extras, the student will be able to confine himself—although with difficulty—within these bounds. But it is obvious that many things are left untouched by this scheme. Of the necessity of private tutors something has been already said. The great expense of books is left entirely unnoticed; the unhappy necessity of dressing decently is also forgotten; travelling expenses are left unrecorded and unreckoned; and when it is added to this that *not one-half* of the year is spent at college, we shall immediately see how much disparity there must be between the L.61, 2s. 10d. and the real bill of expenses for a student's year.

It is necessary, then, to enter upon the more delicate ground of extra expenditure, which may be enlarged to almost any conceivable amount. We will begin by stating our opinion, and then giving our reasons for it, that a student can live creditably and honourably at Oxford for L.130, and at Cambridge for something rather less per annum. The majority of 'men,' we shall say, range higher than this, and a common income is L.200; but so far as absolute necessity is concerned, this is decidedly an easy allowance.

A college bill, of a moderate character, swells to about L.9 more than the amount above shewn, and with many men the remaining L.30 of the L.100 will suffice for clothes if not for books. There are, then, to be considered travelling and other expenses, of which we may instance wine and grocery as considerable items—the former being one without the incurrence of which a 'man' is at once set down as a 'snob' by his more illustrious associates. We say then, again, that upon L.130 a year a student either at Oxford or Cambridge

can live quietly and respectably. Dissipation or extravagance in any way is of course out of the question. At the same time it cannot be denied that many live on less than this, although it is only by dint of a struggling economy. With regard to the other extreme—that of going too far—we can only say, with the *Times*, that the men who indulge in it will have to blame their own folly and recklessness when they find themselves at last in a maze of inextricable difficulty. To preach a sermon, or to moralise in the old trite way on youthful improvidence and rashness, is by no means our object: we have rather desired to put plainly down the statistics and the particulars of certain expenses which many a father is desirous of ascertaining, without knowing how to get at them.

THE PICNIC TO WATENDLATH.

THERE was to be a picnic to Watendlath. The good-tempered Miss Boyles—or, more properly speaking, the Misses Boyle—said they would have one next Wednesday, and of course every person in Keswick was anxious to be invited; for the Misses Boyle were great favourites, and their parties were pronounced the pleasantest of the neighbourhood, though pseudo-fashionables have been heard to call them vulgar. And there certainly was less ceremony and a more hearty hospitality at Derwent House than the aesthetics of social formalism permit; and there was more honest fun, too, than starched cravats and white kid gloves approve of; and dancing was encouraged in the curate's very teeth; and simple nonsense-games, and other innocent follies, were not deemed so mindless as your very intellectual people would have you think them: for the Misses Boyle did not carve their world of humanity out of intellect alone. They were rational, easy-going, sensible women: neither Pompadours nor Trappists; taking the blessings of life as they came, in full enjoyment and perfect moderation, and not thinking that they had a mission to set the universe to rights, nor a divine right to question the sanctity of the gifts of God.

Too old and too ordinary to excite the most transient jealousy even with the vainest, but so youthful in feeling that they were fit companions for children; unselfish, active, and strong, therefore not curbing enterprise nor slackening exertion; attentive to the least attractive of their guests, respectful to the elder—they were the very ideals of old-maids; generally called 'nice' by people of delicacy, and allowed to be 'jolly' even by schoolboys and Cantabs. Now when three old-maids are voted capital by youthful masculines, there must be something genial at least in them; and when they are the favourites of children, there must be something lovable in them; and when they are honoured by the poor and respected by the old, there must be something good in them.

Well, the day of the picnic arrived at last, and the guests met by appointment at eleven o'clock near the Barrow Gate, which leads up to Watendlath. They came by all possible modes of civilised conveyance. Some were in 'tubs,' as they are called at Keswick—small open cars, which hold four people sitting sideways, and which are more safe than luxurious; and some came by boats, in general of a round build, something after the model of coal-barges; and one youth, of aquatic reputation, paddled himself up in a small river-canoë, the only one on the lake, which upset if you leaped an inch out of the perpendicular, and was swamped if it met a wave bigger than a snow-flake.

He was very red when he landed with the exertion of sitting so still, though he boasted of his charming row, and said it was quite easy. Some were on horseback, and some on ponyback; and a few adventurous pedestrians prepared to walk all the way, and to make a great deal of the feat at the end.

The company was of the character usual at such gatherings. There were one or two old-maids and old-bachelors of local repute, of whom the latter were generally supposed to be much desired by the former, and of whom dark rumours of youthful prepossession and unavailing attachments were afloat; and there were several young married couples, one in particular of great popularity, for the wee wife was a laughing, happy, pretty amiability, who made her husband's home a little heaven, and was like sunshine in a drawing-room; and there were many—oh! very many—unmarried girls of all shades of personableness, and of all degrees of matrimonial expectancy; and there were a few unmarried men, of whom the most part were strangers—Cantabs and tourists, with but a fraction left for residents, and these more or less ineligible. And there were chaperons and chaperonesses, and everything else that was necessary in the way of respectability and as social drags on flirting; and so the Misses Boyle had got together the ingredients of a very happy day.

But some of the guests require a more express indication. For instance, there was a young lady fresh from London, whose only country excursions had been an occasional trip to Windsor, or Claremont, or Esher, or haply Hampton and Richmond; who had no idea of mountains beyond Primrose Hill, or of rocks beyond those of the Swiss cottage at the Colosseum, and who was very fastidious in most matters of life. Her dress, too, was as remarkable as her mind and manners; and altogether she was the most striking person of the party. She was young, but not pretty, with a beautiful complexion and fair hair; and she was wonderfully content with her corporeal condition, and quite satisfied that she was the belle of her circle. She wore a lace bonnet that might have claimed the prize at a botanical fête—it was so laden with flowers; and over this was an expensive veil, that seemed of too tender texture for anything but the safe-keeping of a glass-case. She had, moreover, a pale shot-silk gown, very Watteau-like and elegant, but sadly crushed by the narrow dimensions of her peculiar 'tub.' She carried a small *cerise* parasol covered with a deep dropping fringe; and this, together with Parisian boots very thin about the soles, with a shadow on the toes, which imaginative people believed to be leather, and superstitious ones deemed a protection against stones and mud, completed a costume which Jouvne's gloves, that are so dear on account of the Hungarian war, rendered fit for Bond Street or the Champs Elysées. This was her attire for a rugged mountain-road and a secluded mountain-tarn; and all the time a shower was peeping over the top of Skiddaw in the shape of a grim cloud, like the darkened eye of Polyphemus. The young lady in question was Miss Marian Josephine Montague.

There were others worthy of being chronicled too. There was one young lady who had heard a great deal about 'feminine softness' and 'womanly gentleness,' and who had therefore, made timidity her social religion. She shrieked very much when they tried to lift her on a tired, worn-out old pony which had been up Skiddaw before sunrise that day, and was standing with its eyes closed and its head drooping, nodding in a lazy sleep. But she vowed and protested that she could not possibly mount it; and then, when she had got fairly into the saddle, all in a heap, because the pony moved its foot to get rid of a gaddy teasing it,

she screamed loudly for help, and asked, 'What it was doing, and why it was so frisky?' And when they all really started, she kept up a running commentary on the deeds of her horse, wondering why he shook his head, or why his sides quivered. But she got to Watendlath at last without any special damage. Then there was a brave young lady of high animal spirits, who put on her brother's hat and vaulted into a gentleman's saddle, and rode the spirited bay all the distance to the tarn. And there was a shy young gentleman, who lisped, and who found his hands and arms great encumbrances and painful drawbacks on his serenity of mind. There was a venturesome young gentleman, short and clumsy, who dashed at everything, and always failed, but who never allowed the possibility of a superior, from mathematics down to cricket-playing. And there was a proud young gentleman, remotely connected with a bishop, who would not make friends with anybody, and who looked very stiff and awful. And then there were some nice people, who were of rational understandings, and pleasant to talk to.

But the best of all the youths was a handsome young sailor just returned from a long voyage; and the best of all the maidens was a pretty little orphan, looking out for a governess's situation. Their names were respectively Gerald Mayne and Rose Dysart, and they had known each other about six weeks—not longer.

At the Barrow Gate a general readjustment took place. Families dispersed themselves among different tubs—voting it stupid to be always with one's brothers and sisters; and a few young ladies persisted in walking: it was shrewdly surmised by the more *passives* that they wished to have a gentleman all to themselves, and that's why they wanted to walk; and, ugh! how horrible it was to see such boldness! And at last, after a great deal of discussion, and laughter and merriment, the cavalcade proceeded—tubs, horsemen, pony-women, walkers of both sexes, and a few stray dogs. They were a very merry party, and startled the echoes of old Wallow Crag as they wound about his base with sounds as musical and glee as pure as when the Derwentwater nobles hunted and hawked over the hills of their princely earldom.

Now it chanced that Miss Marian Josephine Montague and pretty little Rose Dysart were in the same car, together with one of the Misses Boyle and the bonnie wee wife—dear Mary Hunt. Miss Boyle, for it was the eldest, sweet, motherly, bright in heart's eye; Rose Dysart, one radiant blush of happiness, one mute but eloquent song of innocence and joy speaking on her lip, glowing on her cheek, playing in the light of her eye, and resting on her brow like sunshine on the water—one spirit-word of blessedness that sounded, you knew not how nor when, in perfect harmony with the bright sunshine over head and the lovely flowers by the way; and Mary Hunt, calmer in her smiles than Rose, merrier too, as one who has passed by all fear and lived through her hour of doubt, her sweet voice thrilling through the air in snatches of song or childlike bursts of laughter: they made up a beautiful and a happy trio, different, yet all in unison, like the perfect parts of a masterly song. But the fourth—sitting in her cloud of colours and glistering wealth—how did she fare? With the gloom on her brow, and the sharp line about her lip, and the restless glance of her eye, and the studied motion of her hand and head, she looks but ill at ease! And so she was, for Gerald Mayne would talk more to Rose than to her; and she had taken a fancy to his handsome face.

The road to Watendlath is none of the most luxurious. It might have been paved by the giants before the flood, or have stood proxy for Macadamisation in the days of the sons of Anak—anyway, it is not like walking on a smooth-shaven lawn. It is composed of rocks and cart-ruts, amongst which you must guide your horse or your tub as is most convenient for the preservation of

your osteological system. But it is nothing when you are used to it; and with such wonderful scenery about you, and in the heart of a merry party, the very roughness of the transit gives an additional zest to the pleasure, or ought to do so, with all reasonable people. But Miss Montague was sadly disturbed. First one wheel of the car mounted up in the air with a sudden jerk, and the other delved deep into the earth, as if on a mining expedition; then both came to a level with a plunge that shook the occupants to the heart, that made their knees and elbows jar; then the horse got into a smooth shelf of slate, of which there were many 'cropping out,' as geologists say, on the face of the rugged road; and if it was on a steep hill, as was generally the case, he would slide down with all four legs together, the car following heavily on his quarters, according to the laws of dynamic progression; then the narrow way was still farther narrowed by a heap of stones, or the broken stump of a tree, or it might be a country cart, which had to draw up into the hedge until it was nearly at right angles with the road, or else to rush into the wood among the brushwood and brambles and decayed roots, until you marvelled if it could by any possibility ever be extricated again; then three or four shepherd-dogs would come out barking furiously, as if the whole world of sound had become one gigantic yelp; and then there would be a canine battle with all the picnic dogs—the ladies shrieking in concert.

In the midst of all this Marian Josephine Montague felt sadly out of place, with her butterfly wings fluttering through the wildness of a Cumberland mountain-path. Her flower-shaped parasol brushed off the dewdrops from the overhanging trees in sparkling showers over her lace and Watteau-like silk; her pale fawn gloves were soiled and spoiled; her beautiful veil was torn in two places by a bramble-bush; her boots had got wet through during the single moment of changing cars, for it is always wet in Keswick; and altogether she was in the most miserable condition possible. Poor Marian! her nerves were sorely tried too by the road. At every fresh jolt she screamed in her little sharp, Frenchified way, and tossed her head in utter disgust at the whole thing. 'She had never seen such a car in her life—it was perfectly shocking; and then the driver—he spoke so broadly she could not understand him. And what a road! Fancy how uncivilised and savage the people must be who could live in such a place! And how wild the hedges were—full of weeds, and not kept neat or trim at all! And how dreadful all these dogs were! And what a set of people altogether! What dressing! what gloves! what manners! *Mon Dieu!* but she had never been accustomed to such savagery, and she felt that she quite *manqué* her *métier* there! She was a person of extreme delicacy and sensibility, and she could not understand how people could be so rough and unpolished as to like such a day as this!'

Miss Boyle and Mary Hunt endeavoured to console the London lady. They laughed at her fears, and would have soothed down her temper, but the more they tried to comfort her the deeper grew her frown, the sharper her voice. She appealed to Gerald Mayne: was she not much to be pitied?—she, coming from town, and accustomed to all the *bienséances* of life, to be suddenly thrust into such society? But Gerald Mayne laughed, and said she deserved no pity, for it was all delightful—the very roughness of the road made the pleasure of the trip greater; and if it would only not rain, they would have a picnic fit for emperors and queens. But he was afraid they would be caught after all, for the sky looked so very threatening. And for the hearty sailor-way in which he spoke he was rewarded with the sweetest of smiles from dear Rose, and with sundry nods of approbation from Miss Boyle and pretty Mrs Hunt. The mention of the word rain threw Miss Montague into French hysterics, which lasted until the party arrived at the tarn.

Then came the unpacking—then poured out chickens and tongues, and *patés* and salads, and wine and ale, and cakes and cream, salt, sugar, and sauces, fore-quarters of lamb, and Brobdignagian cucumbers to match; and then came all sorts of surprises—of cream in wine-bottles, and fresh fruit in potted glass dishes; and at every discovery there was a general shriek of laughter, and one universal exclamation of wonder, though every one had seen the same things done before at every picnic ever given at Keswick within the memory of man. But they were all so happy that they were easily amused: like children who, how often soever you cry 'Peep-bo,' still answer you back with a laugh, and are never tired of being astonished by the same thing.

Well, the cloaks and shawls were spread on the ground in the most convenient situations that could be found, and down they all sat, grouped in every variety of colour and action, for the most part engaged in several species of flirtation, according to the fancies of the individuals. The clumsy young man and the spirited young lady sat together; and he was obliged to undergo no little sarcasm from his fair rival, who ridiculed his horsemanship to his face, and made nothing of his cricketering or vaulting. And the timid young lady enlisted the sympathies of a very young Cantab, who with inimitable patience beat the ground for toads or ants, or other small deer, and who thought what a nice girl she was—so ladylike and feminine. But he was a very young man. Miss Montague's splendour shone by Rose Dysart's simple mourning, and the two figures looked very well together, for they were in good contrast, and both perfect in their way. Gerald Mayne was with them; and his handsome face, with fair curling hair and merry blue eyes, never looked to greater advantage than now, when it shone like a sunny landscape full of life and love between the beauty and the elegance of his two companions—for Rose was beautiful, and Miss Montague undeniably elegant.

In a short time it came on to rain: of course it did; it never does anything else at Keswick. Was there ever a picnic among those treacherous old mountains which did not receive its water-supply gratis, without rate or committee? What with Borrowdale sops, and Skiddaw nightcaps, and Basanthwaite cloud-banks, and white cravats about the throats of the mountains generally, the almost universal meteorological predictions of Keswick are—rain and rain again. If local accidents have worked all the physiological phenomena, it seems strange that Cumberland people are not born webfooted. If the black man is black because of the tropical line, why should not the Keswickian be duck-legged because of the topical cloud? Dr Prichard might make something of this question. But who cares for rain at a picnic? What though the salt disappears, changing its normal condition of crystalline particles into a liquid mass, that does not improve the currant-tart nor the custard amongst which it flows—and the sugar undergoes the same metempsychosis among the cucumbers and the chickens: what though the fire hisses sullenly under the miniature waterspout that leaps down among its embers, and tries the respective strength of the rival elements: what though the rain drips off the umbrellas in uncomfortable pools on your knees—your shoulders become large conduits for the whalebone gargoyles above: what though you gather up your feet from their places with an uncomfortable feeling about the soles, and find that they leave an aqueous deposit behind them: what though you see catarrh and rheumatism in every wet dock-leaf you sit near, and in every fresh fountain you receive from your gargoyles—who cares for such things at a picnic? The blacker the cloud the louder the laugh. If the day is not to be perfect, then let extremes meet, and have the worst you can find.

An army of umbrellas sprang up as the shower came down. They looked like large mushrooms on the hill-side—fairy canopies under the Polytechnic microscope. Beneath one—and a very large, faded, cotton, gig umbrella it was—sat Rose Dysart and Gerald Mayne. They were obliged to sit close together to be properly covered, and in doing so Rose's shawl slipped off her shoulders, and Gerald must place it round them again. He said he would pin it, but he was a long time about it; and Rose was so confused somehow that she forgot to tell him to be quicker. She took the umbrella in the meantime, and as it was large and heavy, she could not hold it very high: it sunk down in her pretty little hand till it quite concealed them both from every eye but their own.

Gerald pinned the shawl very carefully. Rose's cheeks were crimson, and her heart was beating as though it would burst. Gerald's hand was unsteady—it trembled visibly. Poor young man! his night-watches on board had evidently shattered his nerves. It is a pity, isn't it, that so young a man should be so shaken? Neither spoke. As to Rose the whole world was silent. She heard nothing, she saw nothing, she knew nothing but the face before her—the spirit which dwelt between her and that noble heart—the sweet, strange word which had not sounded yet, but which was hovering like an odorous atmosphere about them. The unruly shawl! the trembling hand! Hearts, will ye break beneath your tumult? Hush heaven and earth! Two souls that loved before they lived have met each other again, and are recognising the familiar features beneath the strange mask of flesh.

'Rose, I love you!' whispered Gerald; 'will you love me, and be my wife?'

Words short, abrupt, and hurried, but containing in them the weal or woe of two mortal beings.

The small hand lay cold as stone in his—the deep-gray eye drooped bashfully beneath the lid—the blood shot over cheek and neck, and then fled back, and left the pale, clear skin colourless as marble; but the sweet lips parted slow, and one gentle word came forth as a humming-bird from a flower, and Rose Dysart's little 'Yes' sealed on earth the compact which had been made in heaven among the angels.

Miss Marian Josephine Montague was in a pitiable state. She was wet, and cold, and hungry, and she refused everything that was offered to her with such a fastidious air that people stared and laughed among themselves; and those who did not know her, imagined her to be an earl's daughter at least. Even the cream and the currant tarts she exclaimed were execrable, and the people who provided them heard her say so. But it ended, as it generally does in such cases, by her making a wonderful dinner, and declaring that she had eaten nothing—she was so delicate.

The rain was not of long duration. It passed off as quickly as it came, and then the brave old mountains stood out all the better for the washing. The rocks were like molten silver when the sun shone on them trickling with water, while little tufts of wet moss and fern were sprinkled over them like diamonds strung with emeralds; the ravines were so sharp and clear, every stone might almost be counted; and the sheep and cattle on the hills were points of 'high light' in the landscape, which would have sent a conscientious painter hopelessly mad. The flowers and leaves by the way-side were bright with rain, and the sunlight lay entangled in them like threads of silver or locks of burnished gold. The birds sang as if it were a spring morning; and the insects buzzed out in merry myriads, humming through the air in troops that cast a shadow as they flew. Every one cried 'How beautiful!' as some new effect of cloud or light burst on them. But Miss Montague shivered, and said that it was the most wretched day she had ever passed; and what could people find to admire in

those stupid rocks and hideous mountains! And how absurd it was to make such a fuss about a few weeds and rain-drops! She did not gather a large audience, though, to attend to her; but some of the people looked reverently, and wondered who this young lady could be, for she must be so fine and clever to find such fault with everything that others liked!

After dinner was over, and the people had shaken off the wet like so many water-dogs, the shawls and cloaks were hung up to dry, and the fragments of the feast repacked. And when all this was done the gentlemen began to leap. Some leaped well, some couldn't go higher than a few feet, others shook their heads, and declined; the clumsy young gentleman made a dash with a leaping-pole, but refused when he got near, and then laid the fault on his boots; and once he did try, but he knocked down the bar, and fell into the mud; and then it came to Gerald Mayne's turn, and he beat them all hollow. He leaped like a young panther. The pole which he used was simply a small fir sapling, and the height was about ten feet. He vaulted over like a feather, not carrying his pole with him, but using it simply as a lever, then letting it fall on one side while he descended on the other. Rose Dysart felt so proud of him as he won the suffrages of all the guests! for be one's circle ever so insignificant, still, if it is all we know, it is equal to the widest audience that ever greeted a favourite actor, or laid down their reason beneath the foot of a popular minister. And that out-of-the-way nook, that commonplace assembly, were to Rose Dysart equal to the most public position and the widest-spread renown.

'Oh, we sailors are obliged to be active,' said Gerald, smiling and shewing all his small white teeth when praises on praises were flung like bouquets to a singer. 'It is simply a knack: there is nothing in it.'

But his self-depreciation brought fresh applause, and Rose Dysart's heart was filled with such intense delight she dared not analyse it, lest it should escape in the knowledge. Poor, simple Rose! volumes could not express her childlike simplicity more than this little anecdote of her passionate happiness on hearing her lover's leaping praised.

They walked round by Borrowdale—at least some of the party, and Rose was of the number; and then and there was cemented that half-carved piece of love's own workmanship which they had begun to fashion under the faded cotton umbrella. Miss Montague often wondered what they could be talking about that was so interesting; but Miss Boyle, to whom she applied with a peculiar laugh, could not enlighten her, and it was not until some months after that she knew; and then the *Times* told her in an advertisement. Mary Hunt guessed—so did the dear old-maids; and Mary Hunt forced the confession from Rose next day, when she went for the express purpose. And poor orphaned Rose, how glad she was, amongst her other causes of happiness, that she was not obliged now to go out as a governess, and that she would have a home of her own, with some one to look after her and take care of her! Poor little flower, that stood trembling at the sound of the distant blast, and crouching behind its leaves, fearing that the distant would be soon near at hand; though no rare Indian gem, no priceless exotic, no rich golden treasure, thou art a fair young bud on which the heavens smiled kindly when thou wert born, and to whom nature gave the best bounties of her treasury when thou wast dowered!

How happy she was! how innocent! how pure! Her small caresses, her faint words of love, her shy glances, her soft blushes, all spoke eloquently of the depth and the purity of the heart within. And Gerald, as he drew his wee lassie to him, thought how much he had been blessed beyond his deserts, and wondered what he had ever done that Heaven should have rewarded him so well.

Blessed, pure, and good, Rose and Gerald often speak of the happy picnic to Watendlath as they would speak of a baptism into a world of light; and though they have not formally claimed the Dunmow Flitch, it is not for want of deserving it; for from the day of their marriage they have never once regretted the Misses Boyles' happy party, nor the terrible shower which brought them close together under the gig umbrella of washed-out green. The Misses Boyle too, good, innocent women, have stood godmothers to so many little Maynes they sometimes forget the count. But somehow they always remember each individual on his or her birthday, when presents and sage advice remind the youthful citizens of their dear old sponsors at Keswick.

Dear Watendlath! where fairies yet hide, and where railroads can never come: many a mountain-tarn and many a mountain-vale lie scattered like hidden gems among the hills of Cumberland; but in thy still bosom are laid such flowers of loveliness as are surpassed by none other of thy sisters. Home of the sunshine and the swallow, haunt of the fairy and the flower, the fern and the butterfly, like a violet beneath its leaves thou liest hidden behind thy hills, and they who would see thee must seek thee with patience and with love: but few have drunk in thy beauties more greedily than one whose shadow has passed over thy water for the last time. Watendlath, farewell! Betrothing-place of bonnie Rose, may all that visit thee be as pure and fond as she; and may no false lip pollute thy sacred waters, no unclean hand violate thy hallowed flowers; may none be with thee save such as the sun might shew throughout the day's wide-wandering worthy of converse with nature and her glories! Thou art too sacred and holy for the heartless or the vain to come nigh thee. Cradle of prayer alone, may the spirit which dwells in thee keep thy waves and flowers for the reverent and the loving only!

THE ASS OF LA MARCA.

I.—THE HOG-BOY.

In the year 1530, a Franciscan was travelling on foot in the papal territory of Ancona. He was proceeding to Ascoli; but at that time the roads were bad, where there were any roads at all, and after wandering in what appeared to be a wilderness, he lost his bearings altogether and came to a stand-still. A village was visible in the distance, but he was unwilling to proceed so far to ask his way, lest it might prove to be in the wrong direction. While listening intently, however, for some sound that might indicate the propinquity of human beings—for the scrubby wood of the waste, marshy land intercepted his view—he heard what appeared to be a succession of low sobs close by. Mounting a little eminence a few paces off, he saw a small company of hogs widely scattered, and searching with the avidity of famine for a dinner; and rightly conjecturing that the sounds of human grief must proceed from the swineherd, he moved on to the nearest clump of bushes, where he saw on the other side a boy about nine years of age lying upon the soft ground, and endeavouring to smother his sobs in a tuft of coarse moss, while he dug his fingers into the mud in an agony of grief and rage. The good father allowed the storm of emotion to sweep past, and then inquired what was the matter.

'Have you lost any of your hogs?' said he.

'I don't know—and I don't care,' was the answer.

'Why were you crying then?'

'Because they have been using me worse than a hog: they have been beating me—they never let me alone; always bad names, and worse blows; nothing

to eat but leavings, and nothing to lie upon but dirty straw !'

'And for what offence are you used thus?'

'They say I am unhandy at field-work ; that I am useless in the house and the barn ; that I am unfit to be a servant to the horses in the stable ; and that I can't even keep the hogs together. They are hogs themselves—they be ! I was clever enough at home ; but my father could not keep me any longer, and so he sent me to be a farmer's drudge, and turned me out to the—the—hogs !' and the boy gave way to another passionate burst of grief. The Franciscan endeavoured to soothe him, and talked of submission to Providence ; but finding he could do no good he inquired the name of the village.

'Montalto,' replied the boy sulkily.

'Montalto ? Then in which direction lies Ascoli ?'

'Are you going to Ascoli ?' demanded the hog-boy suddenly, as he fixed a pair of blazing eyes on the Franciscan's face in a manner that made him start. 'I will shew you the way,' continued he in a tone of as much decision as if he spoke of some mighty enterprise ; and leaping to his feet like a boy made of Indian-rubber, he led through the scrubby wood of the common, kicking the hogs aside with a fierceness that drew a remonstrance from the good father. This seemed to have the desired effect. His manner softened instantaneously. He spoke in a mild, low voice ; answered the questions that were addressed to him with modesty and good-sense ; and astonished the Franciscan by a display of intelligence rare enough even where natural abilities are developed by education. It was in vain, however, that he reminded his young companion that it was time for him to turn : the hog-boy seemed fascinated by the father's conversation, and always made some excuse for accompanying him a little farther.

'Come, my son,' said the Franciscan at length, 'this must have an end, and here we part. There is a little trifle which I give you with my blessing, and so God speed you !'

'I am going farther,' replied the boy quickly.

'What ! to Ascoli ?'

'Ay, to Ascoli—or to the end of the earth ! Ah, father, if you would but get me something to do—for I am sure you can if you will ; any drudgery, however humble—anything in the world but tending hogs !'

'You forget my profession, my son, and that I am powerless out of it. You would not become a monk yourself ?'

'A monk ! Oh ! wouldn't I ? Only try me !'

'To be a monk is to toil, watch, and pray ; to live meagrely, to submit to innumerable hardships—'

'And to learn, father !—to read, to think !—O what would I not submit to for the sake of knowing what there is in books !' The boy spoke with enthusiasm, and yet with nothing of the coarse impetuosity which had at first almost terrified his new acquaintance. The Franciscan thought he beheld in him the elements of a character well adapted for a religious order ; and after some farther conversation, he finally consented to take the stripling with him to Ascoli. They were now at the summit of an eminence whence they saw that town lying before them, and the village of Montalto hardly discernible in the distance behind. The father looked back for a moment at his companion in some curiosity to see how he would take leave, probably for ever, of the place of his birth. The hog-boy's hands were clenched

as if the nails were embedded in his flesh ; and one arm, trembling with agitation, was stretched forth in a fierce farewell. When he turned away, the blazing eyes again flashed upon the Franciscan's face ; but in an instant they softened, grew mild and tearful, and Felix—for that was the lad's name—followed his patron meekly into the town.

Their destination was a monastery of Cordeliers, where the ex-hog-boy was introduced to the superior, and pleased him so much by his sensible answers and modest demeanour that he at once received the habit of a lay-brother, and was set to assist the sacristan in sweeping the church and lighting the candles. But at leisure hours he was still busied with the dust of the schools, and the lamp of theology. The brethren taught him the responses and grammar ; but he never ceased to teach himself everything he could get at ; so that in the year 1534, when he was only fourteen, he was permitted to enter on his novitiate, and after the usual probation to make his profession. He was, in short, a monk ; and in ten years he had taken deacon's orders, been ordained a priest, and graduated as bachelor and doctor. Felix the hog-boy was now known as Father Montalto.

II.—THE ASS.

The world was now before the Ancona hog-boy. In his boyhood he had suffered stripes and starvation, herded unclean animals, and almost broken his heart with impotent and therefore secret rage. In his youth he had been the patient drudge of a convent, and passed his leisure hours in persevering study, and the accumulation of book-knowledge. But now he was a man, ready for his destiny, and in the midst of troublous times, when a bold, fierce, and fearless character is sure to make its way. No more secret sobs, no more cringing servility, no more studious solitude. Montalto threw himself into the vortex of the world, and struck out boldly, right and left. An impetuous and impatient temper, and haughty and dictatorial manner, were now his prominent characteristics ; and these, united as they were with natural talent and solid acquirements, soon pointed him out for congenial employment. The rising monk was seen and understood by the Cardinals Carpi and Alexandrino ; and by the latter he was appointed Inquisitor-general at Venice. Here was fortune for the poor trampled boy of Ancona ! But to rest there was not his purpose. A little of the tranquillity he knew so well how to assume, or even the mere abstinence from violence and insult, would have retained him in his post ; but instead of this he became harsh, stern, and peremptory to a degree that outraged everybody who came near him, and carried out the measures he determined on with an arbitrary vehemence that bordered on frenzy. The jealous republicans were astonished, but not terrified : the liberties of their strange tyranny were at stake ; and at length the Venetian magnates rose like one man, and Father Montalto only escaped personal violence by flight. And so he was a martyr to the cause of the church ! And so all eyes were drawn upon him, as a man ready in action and inflexible in will. He was now invited by the Cardinal Buon-Campagno to accompany him to Madrid as his chaplain and inquisitorial adviser, the cardinal being sent thither as legate from the pope to his Catholic majesty. Montalto's was an office both of power and dignity, and he acquitted himself in it so zealously, that on the legate's recall he was offered all sorts of ecclesiastical honours and preferment to induce him to settle in Spain. But the monk had other aspirations. The news of the death of Pius IV. had reached Madrid, and Montalto's patron, Cardinal Alexandrino, would doubtless succeed to the papal throne. He would want assistance, and, what is more, he could repay it ; and Father Montalto, rejecting the Spanish offers, hastened to Rome. He found his friend, now Pius V., mindful

of his former services, and perhaps flattered by the reputation which his protégé had made in the world. He was kindly received, and immediately appointed general of his order.

And now the *ci-devant* hog-boy set to sweep the church anew, but in a different way. He no longer troubled himself with theological controversies, but punished his contumacious opponents. In four years after the accession of the new pope he was made a bishop, and handsomely pensioned; and in the year 1570 our adventurer was admitted into the college of cardinals.

Montalto was now fifty years of age, when the will is at its proudest, and the intellectual nature smiles at the changing hair and its prophecies of physical decay. It might be supposed that the fierce inquisitor ripened into the stern and inflexible cardinal; but no such process of development took place. And truly it would have been somewhat inconvenient as matters stood; for his new associates—ranking with kings every man of them, hog-boy and all!—were the intellectual flower of the time, deep and sagacious statesmen, immersed in a game of policy of which the tiara was the prize, and qualified for the lofty contention not more by their talents than by the blood of the Medici, the Caraffa, the Colonna, and the Frangipani, that flowed in their veins. The wild nature of Montalto appeared to be awed by the association into which he had thus been elevated. It seemed as if a vision of his stripes, and his hogs, and his besoms came back upon him, and he walked gingerly along the marble floors of the Vatican, as if alarmed at the echo. He became mild, affable, good-natured; his business was over in the world; he had nothing more to do than to enjoy. Why should he concern himself with intrigues in which he could have no possible interest? Why should he permit even his own family to disturb his dignified repose? One of his nephews, on his way to Rome to see his prodigious uncle and claim his favour, was murdered; but the cardinal, so ready in former days to punish even crimes of thought, interceded for the pardon of the assassin. The relatives who did arrive at the Mecca of their pilgrimage he lodged at an inn, and sent them home to their families the next day with a small present, telling them to trouble him no more. The only promise he made for the future was that by and by, when old age and its infirmities came on, he might perhaps send for one of them to nurse his declining years.

Time wore on, and his patron, Pope Pius V., died and was buried. This was a trouble as well as a grief to our cardinal; for, being obliged to enter the conclave like the rest, he was asked by one and another for his vote. How should he vote? He did not know whom to vote for. He was an obscure and insignificant man—he was; and the rest were all so admirably well-fitted to be pope, that he could not tell the difference. Besides, this was the first conclave he had been in, and in a path so much loftier than he was accustomed to tread, he was afraid of making a false step. He only wished he could vote for them all; but, as it was, he entreated them to manage the affair without him. And so they did; and Cardinal Buon-Campagno being elected, assumed the papal crown and the name of Gregory XIII.

As for Montalto, he grew more meek, modest, and humble every day. He lived frugally, even meanly considering his rank, and gave the residue of his income to the poor. He submitted patiently to all sorts of insults and injuries, and not only forgave his enemies, but treated them with the utmost tenderness. At this time a change appeared to take place in his health. Violent internal pains destroyed his repose; and although he consulted all the doctors in Rome, and took physic from them all, he got no better. His disease was not the less lamentable that it was nameless. He grew thin and pale. Some said he took too much medicine. He

leaned heavily on his staff. His body was bent towards the ground: he seemed like a man who was looking for his grave. Public prayers were offered up in the churches for his recovery; and sometimes with so much effect, that he appeared to be a little convalescent. At such intervals, being humble himself, he delighted to converse with humble persons—such as the domestics of cardinals and ambassadors; and, above all things, auricular confession, if it had not been the sick man's duty, would have been called his hobby. He confessed everybody he could bring to his knees: his mind became a sink through which constantly poured all the iniquities of Rome. His brother cardinals smiled at these weaknesses. The poor man was doubtless sinking into premature dotage. They gave him in ridicule a name taken from the muddy wastes of Ancona in the midst of which he had been picked up by the stray Franciscan: they called him *The Ass of La Marca*.

III.—THE POPE.

Time wore on in this way, till at length Gregory XIII. died. The event took place at a perplexing moment, for never had the college of cardinals been so completely torn asunder by conflicting interests. There were three powerful parties so singularly well-balanced that each felt sure of being able to elect the new pope, and the poor Ass of La Marca, who was once more obliged to join the conclave, was half-distracted with their various claims. All they cared about was his vote; but that was important. They were compelled, however, by tradition, to go through the form of consulting him from time to time; and the cardinal, though never giving way to impatience, was pathetic in his entreaties to be let alone. According to the custom of this solemn council, each member of the holy college was shut up in a separate room; and the messengers always found Montalto's door bolted. He would reply to their eminences, he said, the moment his cough abated, the moment he felt any intermission of his excruciating pains. But why could they not proceed to business without him? The opinions of so insignificant a person could not at any time be necessary; but surely it was inhuman to disturb a man fast sinking under disease, and whose thoughts were fixed upon that world to which he was hastening. The conclave sat fourteen days, and even then the votes of the three parties were equally divided. What was to be done? The best way was to have a nominal pope for the shortest possible time, so that the struggle of the real competitors might begin anew. They accordingly elected unanimously to the papal throne—the Ass of La Marca!

On this announcement the new monarch came instantly forth from his cell, leaving behind him his staff, his cough, his stoop, his pains, his infirmities, and his humility! He advanced with an erect figure, and a firm and dignified step into the midst of the conclave, and thanked their eminences for the honour they had conferred upon him, which he would endeavour to merit by discharging its high functions conscientiously. As he passed from the sacred council the *cries* of the people rent the air. 'Long live the pope!' they cried; 'justice, plenty, and large loaves!' 'Address yourselves to God for plenty,' was the answer; 'I will give you justice.'

And he kept his word: ready, stern, severe, inflexible, impartial justice! He was impatient to see the triple crown; and before preparations could be made for his coronation, he caused the bauble to be produced, and placed on a velvet cushion in the room where he sat. The bauble? It was no bauble to him. It was the symbol of Power, just as he was himself the personification of Will. It was the thought which had governed his whole life—which had blazed even in the unconscious eyes of his boyhood. With what memories was that long gaze filled—with what re-

solves! The room was crowded with spectres of the past and visions of the future, that met and blended in one homogeneous character; and as Pope Sixtus V. rose from his chair, he felt proudly that there rose with him—within him—throughout him—the hog-boy of Montalto.

The dissimulation which was so remarkable a trait in this remarkable character was now at an end, and only the fierceness, sternness, and indomitable will of the man remained. He felt himself to be placed on a height from which everything beneath him appeared on one level. The cardinals, with their ancient blood and accomplished statesmanship, were no more to him than the meanest drudges in his dominions; and when they first attempted remonstrance at his proceedings, he answered them with such withering disdain, that the proudest of them quailed beneath his eye. He told them distinctly that he was not only their spiritual head but their temporal king, and that in neither capacity would he brook any interference with his authority. It was the custom, on the accession of a pope, for the prisoners to be manumitted in all the jails of Rome; and the consequence of this equivocal mercy was, that these places of durance were always full at such a time—the whole villany of the city taking the opportunity of committing murders, robberies, and other great crimes that would be cheaply visited by a brief imprisonment. When Sixtus was asked, as a matter of form, for his sanction to the discharge of the prisoners, he peremptorily refused it. In vain the members of the holy college, in vain the civic authorities, implored him not to set tradition at defiance: he ordered for instant execution those legally deserving of death, and in the case of the others, did not abate a single day of their confinement. Even the respect paid to his own person by the populace became a crime, since it interfered with his designs. The perpetual *vivas* with which he was greeted made his whereabouts so public that he could not come unawares into any suspected place, and he issued an order forbidding such demonstrations. One day, however, two citizens were so enthusiastic in their loyalty that they could not repress the cry of 'Long live the Pope!' which rose to their lips; whereupon the offenders were instantly laid hold of by the orders of Sixtus, and received a hearty flogging.

This *parvenu* pope treated with other monarchs with the unbending dignity which might have been looked for in the descendant of a line of kings; and in some cases—more especially that of Spain—he exhibited the uncompromising sternness of his character. But where the interest of his policy was not involved—where the actors in the drama of life moved in circles that had no contact with his—he admired with all his impulsive soul a masculine and independent spirit. So far did he carry his admiration of our Protestant Queen Elizabeth, who was his contemporary, that one might almost fancy the solitary monk day-dreaming of those times when even popes were permitted a mortal bride. He is said to have given her secret intimation of the approaching Armada of his Catholic majesty; and when the head of the Catholic Queen of Scotland rolled under the axe of the executioner, he is described as having emitted an exclamation of fierce and exulting applause at this memorable exhibition of will and power.

And so Sixtus lived, and reigned, and died—a stern, strong spirit of his day and generation, leaving a broad trail in history, and a lasting monument in the architectural stones of Rome. In the biography of common men, who are swayed by changing currents of passion and circumstance, it would be vain to attempt to explain actions and reconcile inconsistencies, as we have done here, by viewing all their doings, and all the phases of their character, with reference to a leading principle. But Sixtus was governed from his

birth by one great thought, though fully developed only by the force of events—a thought as obvious in the hog-boy of Ancona, or the drudge of the Cordeliers, as in the monk Montalto, the inquisitor, the cardinal, and the pope.

FREAKS OF THE ENGLISH ABROAD.

JOHN BULL is certainly a strange animal. So long as he is in his own country, he is as quiet and harmless as a lamb; but no sooner does he set his foot on foreign land, than his nature undergoes a perfect change—he becomes, as it were, transformed. The lion, or perhaps more properly speaking, the bear, taking the place of the lamb in his composition, he begins to growl and look savage. Sometimes he scatters about his money with haughty liberality; sometimes he abuses everything and everybody around him; and not unfrequently he commits such outrages on persons and things as he would never for a moment think of in his native land. In all my travels I have found him the same everywhere: he is a marked character; he will not submit to the good old advice: 'When in Rome, do as Rome does,' but will have his own way after his own fashion. If, for instance, he is in a Catholic country, he enters the churches, asks to see the relics, shrines, &c., to satisfy his curiosity—for Johnny is curious enough when abroad—and when they are shewn to him, he laughs. He has also the habit of walking about and talking loud during divine service, which he thinks shews his consequence, forgetting that he is in the house of prayer. Again, if he meets a funeral or religious procession in the street, he positively refuses to take his hat off—why should he?—but it often happens that it is taken off for him, whereupon he shews fight. Then he must needs write, cut his name, or leave some mark of his pilgrimage wherever he goes, whether it be on a beautiful statue, column, ruin, or church: take, for example, plain 'William Thomson, Newcastle,' as it appears on Pompey's Pillar at Alexandria, written with a tar-brush in letters larger than the gigantic mind of Julian ever conceived. Go to the Lazaretto at Malta, examine the soft stone floors, and they will inform you in true tablet style—skull, cross-bones, and all—that sundry bodies, including those of 'John Smith and his beloved wife, both of London, have reposed there in peace during the space of ten days, looking forward to a happy release.' Come, let us mount to the top of the Great Pyramid, and find if you can a single square inch uncut: visit Jerusalem, the Holy City, walk through its streets, behold its ancient walls, even the Arch of Ecce Homo in the Via Dolorosa, and see there, in good bold English type, 'Try Holloway's Pills.' Let us leave Jerusalem, proceed towards Jaffa, but rest at the hospitable convent at Ramalie, and on one of the bedroom doors we shall see among a host of illustrious names that of 'B. D'Israeli, 1831,' under which some wag has inscribed 'Old clo! Old clo!'

John has another little eccentricity: he likes to pay more for everything he buys or sees than anybody else, yet he tries to appear not to like it, and constantly complains of being cheated and robbed. Go to Switzerland, or up the Rhine—John Bull's summer resorts—and you will find the scale of charges at the hotels—supposing breakfast to be the meal—something like the following:—For a German with a knapsack and a pipe, half a franc; for a Frenchman with light-cloth boots, primrose gloves, and glossy hat, one franc; for an Englishman with his wife, ten children, and a van-load of luggage, two francs each, and one franc *pour le garçon*. Now the regular fee for a guide to pass in safety from Jerusalem to Jericho—a somewhat dangerous road—is 100 piastres; but a certain John Bull, in his awkward generosity, must needs give 200, so that ever since that sum is demanded by the Arab sheik of every English traveller, and unless he has previously learned that the

customary *bucksheesh* is only 100, he is sure to be forced to pay it. But sometimes the freaks of John Bull partake of the wanton and mischievous, as the following examples will shew:—

A few years back I was travelling in a steamboat on the Rhine, when I was suddenly accosted by a rather rakish-looking young man.

'I think I have seen you before, sir,' said he. 'Ah! I recollect now it was at the Convent of Mount St Bernard. You remember what a lovely night it was when we were there, and how brightly the moon and stars shone forth! Do you know what I did while there?'

'No.'

'Well then, I'll tell you. You remember the *morgue*, the place where they keep the bodies of persons they find buried in the snow?—and the tales those old monks told us about the different skeletons?—although I don't believe half the fellows said—they can draw the long-bow so precious tight. Well, after supper, when you were sitting snugly over the fire—how cold it was!—I stole out of the convent, and went to the morgue, and got into it by one of the air-holes in the wall, my object being to carry away something as a *souvenir*. When I began to look around me I must say I felt somewhat queer, for the moon was shining through the various holes right into the building, and made the skeletons look so comically white! They all seemed to be on the full grin at me—one old fellow especially, up in a corner: perhaps you remember him, for the monk who shewed us the place told us some story about him. Whenever I turned, there he was with his diabolical grin. At last I could stand it no longer, and struck at the fellow with this stick, which I had with me at the time, and down he came. You should have heard his old bones rattle! But what do you think I did? Why I carried off his grinning skull as a relic, and have got it now safe in my portmanteau: that's what I call travelling to some purpose!'

At the eastern extremity of that portion of the city of Valetta (Malta) known as Florian, stands a Capuchin convent. In the crypt are preserved the bodies of the deceased monks, placed upright in niches, and dressed in the habit of the order. A party of English sea-captains were shewn this crypt, when the guide called their attention to a particular body, which he told them was that of a superior; a man who, while living, was noted for his great learning, piety, and charity, and was therefore looked upon by his brethren almost in the light of a saint. On hearing this, one of the sailors, taking the opportunity of the guide's back being turned, took out his clasp-knife, and cut off the right-hand thumb. The mutilation was not discovered at the time, and the fellow escaped punishment. I know a person to whom he afterwards shewed the thumb, glorying in the deed; but I am happy to say he met with anything but the applause he expected. The disfigured hand was pointed out to me on my visit to the convent. Ladies are now excluded except on certain days, and for this reason:—A party of English ladies and gentlemen paid a visit to the convent, and were, as usual, shewn into the crypt. One of the gentlemen, no doubt thinking it would be a good joke, pinned the gown of one of the ladies to the robe of one of the mummies, and the consequence was, that when she moved suddenly away, she pulled the body out of the niche, and dashed it to pieces on the floor.

One evening, at a dinner-party at Cairo, the conversation turned upon museums, when up started a young English traveller, and boastingly said: 'Gentlemen, I've travelled through Italy and Greece, and am making a collection, but you'll never guess what it is, so I may as well tell you. Why, it's a collection of the noses of all the heathen gods and goddesses, saints and sinners, I can lay my hands upon. I always carry with me a hammer, and whenever I see a statue, and an

opportunity presents itself, I knock the nose off, and then carefully label it. Now one of my principal objects in coming to Egypt is to get the nose of a certain statue,' which he named, but I have forgotten what it was, 'and I mean to have it too.' His intention, however, was happily foiled by a gentleman, a well-known antiquary at Cairo, sending word to the Arabs to cover over with sand the statue this modern Goth intended to mutilate, and so putting the sapient nose-collector on a false scent.

I fell in with a party of travellers in Syria who required shelter for the night; so they knocked at the door of an Arab farmer's house, and it not being opened so soon as they considered desirable, one of the party drew a pistol from his belt, and firing it, blew off the lock: they then entered, turned the family out, and coolly took possession for the night. They settled the matter the next morning by paying about ten times more than would have been necessary had they gone the proper way to work.

The following circumstance took place about three years ago. A Mr R—, an English traveller, pitched his tent for the night in one of the numerous villages on the Lebanon. While in the full enjoyment of his pipe, the children of the village kept peeping into the tent to look at the strange Frank: this, it appears, greatly annoyed our countryman, so that at last he drew his pistol, and shot one of the little boys. As may be supposed, the whole village was up in arms to avenge this wanton outrage, and Mr R— would soon have received the reward he so richly merited, had it not been for the Sheikh el Belled or village chief, who advised taking him before the British consul at Beyrout. This was accordingly done. It was proposed that he should be sent to Malta, to take his trial for murder; but the child not being dead, it was at last settled that he should pay L.300 to the parents, and L.50 for the outrage committed on the village. Placing security in the hands of the consul for the amount, he was allowed to depart, and set out for Damascus the next day—on the following day the child died. On his arrival at Damascus he railed at the decision of the consul; but on hearing of the death of his victim, and being told that he had better hold his tongue, he beat a hasty retreat from the Holy Land, never, I trust, to pollute it again with his presence.

It is now to be hoped, that as travelling and intercourse with foreign countries become more common, John Bull will mend his manners, and see the folly of his ways: perhaps the least culpable of all his acts is, when he turns his steps homeward to recount to his untravelled and wonder-stricken friends all the extravagances of which he has been guilty.

CHINESE PORCELAIN-SEALS FOUND IN IRELAND.

Of all the curious remains which have been found in the sister-country, none are enveloped in greater mystery than the porcelain-seals which have lately come to light. The first public notice of them, we believe, was in the year 1840, when Mr Huband Smith of Dublin called the attention of the Irish Academy to the fact, that about a dozen seals, bearing ancient Chinese characters, had been found within the last few years in various parts of Ireland, and in situations which precluded the supposition that they were of modern introduction; opening a wide field for conjecture as to the time when they made their way into this country. The matter was taken up by several zealous antiquaries in Ulster, whose farther researches have increased the number fourfold; and lest these remains should come to be confounded with importations consequent on our recently-established intercourse with the Celestial Empire, a complete catalogue has been made of them, the history of each has been investigated and

chronicled, and its present resting-place registered. Not only have the most eminent Chinese scholars in this country been consulted about them, but impressions of the greater part have been transmitted to China itself for explanation. The result of the whole investigation was laid before the Literary Society of Belfast on the 6th May 1850 by Edmund Getty, Esq.* and it embraces some curious and interesting particulars.

Each of these seals consists of a perfect cube, with the figure of a Chinese monkey sitting upon it by way of handle; and they are all so exactly like each other in size, shape, and general appearance, as to be undistinguishable except by the inscriptions on the under surface. The material is porcelain; and, from the great degree of heat to which they must have been subjected, and the vitrification which has in some measure taken place in consequence, they are as indestructible by corrosion or other operation of time as the glass and porcelain ornaments which are found in the mummy-cases of Egypt. The inscriptions are in the Chuentze or ancient-seal character of China, which, though as old as the days of Confucius—five or six centuries before the Christian era—is often used at the present day on the seals both of public functionaries and private individuals, in the same way that we employ the black-letter of our Gothic ancestors for fancy purposes.

These inscriptions seem to be as numerous and varied as those on our own fancy-seals and wafers; and they have often as little apparent connection with a written correspondence. Such are 'Yih tsaon ting' ('A portico of straw'), alluding to the sheds erected on the roads for the accommodation of travellers; 'Shan kaon shwuy shang' ('High mountains and long streams.') Sometimes they are sentimental mottoes, and sometimes they appear to be mere proper names, and difficult of explanation. On a comparison of five sets of translations now before us, one of which is by the late lamented Dr Gutzlaff, we select a few of the mottoes which seem to be the least ambiguous, judging from the unanimity of the translators.

'Ying fung lung yue' ('Singing in the breeze and playing under the moon'), an allusion to people amusing themselves out of doors in a cool moonlight night. 'Hoo fung' ('Sealed or shut.') Several Eastern nations despatch their letters without any kind of paste or wax; but they write a curse or ill-omen to him who shall violate their secrecy. It is said that in ancient times the Chinese secured their missives merely by stamping or writing on the outside the words—'closed,' 'sealed,' or 'shut.' In our day they generally paste down the flap of the envelope with a few grains of boiled rice, and stamp it with a red ink or thin paste, in the same way that our postmasters do—one-half of the impression being on the flap, and the other on the main part of the envelope. Hence Mr Meadows translates this inscription 'Protecting the closure.' Another motto is—'Shwuy lo shih chuh' ('When the water falls, the stones appear'); perhaps a metaphorical way of expressing that the truth of a case comes to light through the removal of obscuring circumstances; or, as some think, an adage equivalent to the Latin one—'Gutta cavat lapidem,' and intended to convey the idea of constancy or perseverance. Two of the seals bear the motto rendered a 'pure heart'; another has—'Tsun sin tsen le' ('An inch-long heart extending a thousand le'), which one translator deems equivalent to 'My little heart goes a thousand le to meet you;' while by another it is thought to allude to the thoughts of friends reaching each other at the greatest distances by means of

writing. 'Tuy ke keih jin' ('Put one's self in another's place'), refers to a Confucian aphorism which is equivalent to the Christian one—'Do as you would be done by.' 'Wei che sze yay' ('Men do not think of it'—virtue), is a quotation from the 'Sun yu' of Confucius. And lastly, 'Tsaé shwuy yih fang' ('Must be in the neighbourhood of the water'), is a quotation from a Chinese ode, in which a man not seeing his friend conjectures where he may be.

These curious seals, amounting to about fifty, have been found at various times, and in localities very distant from each other. The one registered as No. 7 was discovered about seventy years ago by a turf-cutter in a bog in Queen's County; No. 5 was found at no great depth near the town of Carlow, on the site of an old road which led to the Roman Catholic burying-ground, but which has been closed since the year 1798; No. 12 was dug up about forty years ago in taking out the roots of an old pear-tree in an orchard in the County Down, and from the age of the tree it must have lain there a long time before its discovery; No. 26, now in the museum of the Royal Irish Academy, was found in 1833 in a ploughed field near Borris-O-Kane, County Tipperary; No. 3 in the parish of Killyleagh, County Down, in a piece of ground which was overgrown with furze, and appeared never to have been cultivated: it is in the Belfast Museum; No. 13 has been in the possession of a private family in Dublin for at least seventy or eighty years, but there is no record of its previous history; No. 45 was found about the year 1805 in a cave near the mouth of Cork Harbour; and No. 50 about ten years ago, immediately outside Cahir Castle. Some human bones were found with this seal, but they mouldered to dust on exposure to the atmosphere.

The interesting question is: How or when did these seals find their way to Ireland? The specimens themselves furnish no clue to their antiquity; for their substance is absolutely imperishable, while 'the character,' says Sir J. F. Davis, 'is sufficiently ancient for any assignable date within our reach.' When they were first introduced to public notice, a correspondent of the 'Athenæum,' said to be a Chinese scholar, irreverently declared them to be 'evidently a hoax'—modern importations purchased in London, and sown in Ireland for the benefit of the Academy. The native antiquaries, shocked at his presumption, appealed to Sir J. F. Davis, who quite agreed with them, that even were these seals like those recently brought from China—which they are not—one 'would be so "superfluous" as to journey about the most distant localities for the purpose of hiding them in those peat-bogs, burial-grounds, and beds of rivers, where mere chance has led to their discovery; and if not of modern, it almost necessarily follows that they must have been of very ancient introduction. It has been supposed by others that they may have been introduced accidentally in tea-chests; but if so, it is strange that none but Irish packages should have contained them. Another conjecture is, that they may have been brought to this country by individuals connected with Lord Macartney's embassy in 1792; but it is to be noted that no such seals are found in his lordship's own collections of Chinese curiosities, which are still preserved by his representatives. In fact, not a single specimen of the same kind has been found in any modern collection. Seals of stentite, generally of long rectangular form—not cubical—with an animal at one end, and either with or without inscriptions, are in common use in China, and large numbers of them have been brought to England. 'But this,' says an Irish antiquary, 'can have nothing to say to our porcelain-seals, which most evidently have been cast in moulds, and are quite too hard and brittle to admit of the operation of carving, by which ornaments of agalmatolite have been generally produced—a circumstance which alone would

* Notices of Chinese Seals found in Ireland, read before the Belfast Literary Society, by Edmund Getty, M.R.I.A. Belfast: Marcus Ward & Co.

† A le is about a third of an English mile.

make it highly improbable that they would, if buried for any considerable length of time, preserve in any degree their original form.*

A diligent search has been made in the curiosity-shops of London, and in other places where sailors would be likely to dispose of articles brought from foreign lands, but only one specimen could be found similar to those under consideration; and the shopkeeper being urged to say how he had obtained it, stated that he had bought it from a person who told him that it had been found in Ireland. Subsequent information led to the belief that it had been one of four sold out of a private collection in Dublin.

The antiquaries who have taken so much trouble on this subject, fondly cling to the persuasion, though they express it with great modesty, that these seals may be vestiges of the ancient Phœnician commerce with our western shores. There seems little doubt that there was in early times an overland trade between the Celestial Empire and the countries adjacent to Phœnicia, and in communication with it. Vases unquestionably Chinese have been discovered in the tombs of Egypt; and Pliny, with other Roman authors, mentions certain murrine cups or vases, which appear to have been identical with Chinese porcelain. They were introduced at Rome by Pompey after the Mithridatic war, and became articles of luxury among the wealthier Roman nobles, who gave enormous prices for them, on account of their fragility, taken in connection with the immense distance of the Eastern country whence they were said to come. It is certainly strange, he remarks, that the relics found in Ireland are seals and not cups, perfume-bottles, coins, medals, or any other usual article of commerce.

It is to be hoped that the intercourse now opened with China may throw some light on this subject. It can probably be ascertained whether such seals as we have described are now found there; and if so, whether they are considered to be of ancient or modern manufacture. Even if the latter prove to be the case, however, it would not materially weaken the presumption of the antiquity of those now brought to light, considering that the Chinese preserve the customs of the remotest periods, as well as their antiquarian remains, with a religious care and veneration unequalled among any other people.

THE 'ROMANCE' OF SEA-LIFE.

We personally know something of the sea, of sailors, and of their life both ashore and afloat, both in the fore-castle and the cabin, both abroad and at home. We know also that there is a marvellously prevalent notion among landsmen that a sailor's life is the most romantic of all lives, and that he is himself a very romantic personage individually. We know that the mere name of 'sea,' 'ship,' or 'sailor' excites emotion in the breasts of novel-reading lads, and adventurous youths in general. There seems to be an inherent witchery in the very idea of the 'glad waters of the dark-blue sea;' but this has been stimulated a thousand-fold by the popular songs of Dibdin and others, portraying sailors in such colours that they cannot recognise themselves,* and also by certain modern fictions, which, however admirable as works of art, convey anything but a correct notion of the real work-a-day life of the gallant but plain, honest fellows who man England's wooden-walls. In the books in question, everything which can throw a charm over the sea—

everything which tends to impress the reader with a vague idea that sailors are a separate race of mortals, with most fascinating characteristics—is skilfully dwelt upon; but the stern, homely, matter-of-fact, monotonous life they lead is carefully kept in the background, or alluded to in a very slight and deceptive manner. Can we wonder, therefore, that boys of ardent imaginations are absorbingly attracted by such an idealised profession? So enthralling is the love of the sea thus generated, that a good authority declares that he has known youths who could not hear the creaking of a block used in hoisting sugar to the upper floor of a grocer's warehouse, without their imaginations being fired with vivid dreams of ships and the ocean! Once let a stripling become impressed with a longing for the sea, no matter how generated, and the very means you adopt to check his diseased fancy will only strengthen and confirm it. Yet his case is precisely analogous to that of a youth falling passionately in love with a maiden whom he has never seen!

We can give a case in point in which we were personally concerned. About eight years ago, we ourselves were guilty of writing a sea-novel, a copy of which fell into the hands of a boy, a first-cousin of ours. He told us that he had read it over and over till he knew it by heart, and nothing would serve his turn but he must go to sea. His parents were distressed, and we had a long interview with him, and did our utmost to disabuse his mind of the romantic notions which our own book alone had created. All in vain! He would believe his own wild impression from our fiction rather than our sober, truthful *vis-à-vis* advice. He went a short first voyage on liking, and on his return frankly told us that had he known what a hard, harsh life a sailor's really was, he would never have quitted land. 'But,' said he, 'I shall be laughed at if I give it up now! I am a sailor for life, and all through that book of yours!' He was then regularly apprenticed to a merchantman, but the mate treated him so cruelly that he deserted to a man-of-war, and, if living, he is probably yet in the navy.

The two great classes of boys who go to sea are those who have imbibed romantic notions concerning it, and long to realise them; and those who are sent by their friends as a means to reform them of bad habits. Of the two, the latter class generally make the best sailors; the others are too much disgusted at the reality, too heart-broken at the utter annihilation of all their fine dreams, to take kindly and well to their rough calling. There are of course numerous exceptions in both classes; and of the former, many cling to the sea, and learn to become good sailors out of sheer desperation and stubborn resolve to make the best of a bad bargain, rather than acknowledge themselves to be woefully deceived.

Let us not be misunderstood. We ourselves enthusiastically loved the sea when young, and we love it yet, but in a very different degree. It is a noble profession, that of the wild waves' mastery, but it is emphatically one of the hardest, worst paid, and most prosaic! Yes, young readers of Fenimore Cooper, we say it is right-down prosaic; and we know what it is to lay out on a yard in a hurricane. We say, moreover, that sailors themselves are, with very few exceptions, the most prosaic and matter-of-fact among mortals. You may sneer at this; but one week, one day, nay, even one hour of actual sea-service would perhaps convince you that we are speaking advisedly. Let truth be spoken above all things. A sailor's life brings him in occasional contact with sublime manifestations of the Divine power, but he little regards them. His duties absorb all his attention, and there is no time for sight-seeing and reflection, nor is sentiment of any kind allowed to be indulged in on shipboard. On the other hand, he will for weeks and months lead the dullest and most unexciting life conceivable. Day

* We may perhaps except a few of Dibdin's best songs; but the actual fact is, that the songs which are really sung on shipboard are as different from Dibdin's as it is possible to conceive. The songs which sailors love to sing are doggerel, without a spark of imagination. It has been said that Dibdin's songs recruited the navy in war-time more than a dozen pressgangs. Yes, but the songs did not cause sailors to ship, but only landsmen.

after day the same monotonous round of commonplace duties are exacted with iron discipline. Work, work, nothing but work, and not a minute spent in idleness. It is all very pleasant to you, young gentleman, to sit with your feet on a parlour fender, and gloat over picturesque and highly-wrought descriptions of nautical manoeuvres, but we can tell you that not one of these is felt to be anything but ordinary work by those who actually perform them. There is nothing very delightful in the hourly act of running up and down ladders like a bricklayer's labourer, and hauling rough ropes till your back feels ready to break and your heart to burst; there is nothing peculiarly elevating and chivalrous in the act of picking oakum, and making spun-yarn and sinnet—and sailors are steadily kept at these and similar labours in the intervals between shifting sails; nor is there any inexpressible charm in the act of scraping and oiling masts and yards, and washing decks and tarring rigging.

Now suppose, young friend, that your parents have at length yielded to your frantic entreaties that you may be a sailor, and that you are regularly apprenticed to an East Indiaman. The dream of your life, the cherished prayer of your heart, is fulfilled. You set your foot on the snowy decks with thrilling feelings—proud and glowing aspirations and anticipations. The ship sails, and for a day or so you are too sick to do any duty, and too much a piece of mere lumber in everybody's way during the hurry of departure; so you are unceremoniously kicked below to rough it out as you may. On the morning of the second day you find yourself included in the first-mate's watch, which happens to be the morning-watch—4 A.M. to 8 A.M.—and are called on deck. You stagger up, feeling very queer, very weak, very miserable. It is a fine summer morning, with a steady breeze, and the ship is calmly gliding along on a taut-bowline. You have no heart to look much about you, but you see that every soul on deck is at work. You sit down on the booms, greatly exhausted, and the next moment a rope's end is smartly laid across your shoulders, and the mate, with an oath, asks you whether you have shipped to sit for a figure-head, and the sailors chuckle, and the ship-boys wink and grin, and put out their tongues. You rub your shoulders in amazement, and think of your poor mother at home, and burst into tears. The mate calls you a snivelling milksop, and sets you to scrape the tar off a seam of the deck recently *payed*, with a mysterious admonition that if you don't mind what you are about you will receive a liberal allowance of 'beans and bacon!' You don't know what beans and bacon means on shipboard; but you do know that your soft white hands are very sore with grasping the shaft of the rough scraper, and very pitchy in a few minutes, and you mentally think there is very little romance in the operation. Four bells strike—6 A.M.—and the word is given to rig the head-pumps, and wash down the decks. The sailors roughly call you to bear a hand; and you have to pump away, and to take off your shoes and stockings, and paddle with naked feet among the cold water surging over the decks. Then comes the holy-stoning part; and you are set to haul about the 'bibles'—as sailors profanely call the large stones—and to kneel and rub away with 'prayer-books'—small hand-stones—till you fancy it is just the sort of work your mother's kitchenmaid is used to, and you are thankful none of your friends see you engaged at it, and you are very certain there isn't a bit of romance in it. This lasts till eight bells, and you then go to breakfast with what appetite you may.

Four hours later you are summoned on deck again; and the sailors push and knock you about, and one orders you to do this, and another to do that, and all swear at you for your awkwardness and stupidity, and you are perfectly bewildered and frightened, and a picture of misery. The busy mate sees you; and—

'Hollo you, sir!' cries he, 'skulking again, are you? I'll polish you! Take that bucket of slush, and lay aloft and rub down the royal-mast. And mind what you do, for my eye is on you!'

You have a bucket of tar and grease and a bunch of oakum thrust into your clammy hands, and are hurried aloft. How you ever get to the royal-masthead you have no subsequent recollection. You are too dizzy to know what you are about; but the mate, whom you think is a demon, is nothing of the sort. He is only doing his duty. You have shipped to become a sailor, and he is beginning to make a sailor of you. He sends an experienced ship-boy aloft to look after you, and this youth digs his knuckles into your sides to make you ascend, and tells you to fix your eyes above your head instead of below your feet; and when you hesitate to dip your delicate fist in the stinking slush, he deliberately gives you a dab in the mouth with it, and asks you who you think you are? You hardly know yourself by this time who you are nor what you are; but you feel in every bone of your body and every tingling muscle that you have found no romance in a sailor's life yet.

And, my young friend, what is more, you never will! There is no romance in life at sea. You will find it nothing but hard work—hourly drudgery. Every soul on board a ship, from cabin-boy to captain, has duties which fully occupy every minute of his time—hard duties, stern duties, prosaic duties. Every private feeling, consideration, and predilection, yields to them. A sailor, no matter what his station, never indulges in romantic fancies of any kind. His life and conversation, whether aloft or ashore, are as matter-of-fact as those of a baker or tallow-chandler. He lives a life of extreme hardship, toil, and privation; and the reason he follows the sea all his days is very frequently because three or four years of sea-life totally unfit him for any other calling.

What we have thus briefly written is the unvarnished truth, and if it induces any youth to pause ere he rashly and unwittingly embraces the sea as a profession, owing to exaggerated and false notions of its presumed romantic nature, we shall be glad; but if, with his eyes open to a full consciousness and conviction that there is no romance in regular daily life at sea, although there is plenty of all kinds of hard work, he should still persist in slipping on the blue jacket, why, we heartily say to him: 'God speed you! you are the stuff to make a sailor!'

EFFECTS OF EDUCATION ON THE ROBIN.

The most remarkable instance I ever remember to have met with of a young pupil not only imitating, but far surpassing his tutor, was about nine years ago, in Jermyn Street, Haymarket. At that period I revelled in the undisturbed enjoyment of a large aviary, numbering no fewer than 366 inhabitants, all first-rate songsters; and my fame as an amateur had spread widely. Among the multitude of my visitors was a gentleman, who informed me that a friend of his was possessed of a most wonderful bird, that he should much like me to see and hear. I took the address, and went at an early day to view the prodigy. On entering the house referred to, and on presenting my card, I was at once ushered into the drawing-room. I there saw two cages—nightingale cages—suspended on the wall. One of them, with a nightingale in it, had an open front; the other had a green curtain drawn down over the front, concealing the inmate. After a little discourse on the subject of ornithology, my host asked me if I should like to hear one of his nightingales sing. Of course I was all expectation. Placing me beneath the cage, and drawing up the curtain before alluded to, the bird above, at a whistle from his master, broke out in a succession of strains that I never heard surpassed by any nightingale. They were indeed surprisingly eloquent. 'What a nightingale!'

ejaculated I. The rapid utterance of the bird, his perfect abandon to the inspiration of his muse, and his indifference to all around him, caused me to involuntarily exclaim with Coleridge:

—'That strain again!
Full fain it would delay me.'

And so it did. I stood rivetted to the spot, knowing how seldom nightingales in a cage so deported themselves. After listening some time, and expressing my astonishment at the long-repeated efforts of the performer—so unusual, I asked to be allowed a sight of him. Permission was granted; the curtain was raised, and I saw before me—a robin! This bird had been brought up under the nightingale from his very earliest infancy, and not only equalled, but very far surpassed his master in song. Indeed he put him down and silenced him altogether. This identical bird, I should add, was sold a few weeks afterwards for nine guineas: he was worth the money. In this case the robin retained no one single note of his own whereby the finest ear could detect him; and this paves the way to still more singular discoveries hereafter.—*William Kidd in the Gardeners' Chronicle.*

AN UGLY ENCOUNTER.

In a lately-published American work, entitled 'Forest Life,' by J. S. Springer, the following anecdote is given respecting an encounter in the northern woods with a ferocious animal of the tiger kind, of which the natives stand in great dread, from its uncompromising ferocity. An individual named Smith, while travelling through the forests, had the bad fortune to encounter one of these creatures. He had nearly reached an encampment of his companion lumberers, when the animal stood before him. There was no chance for retreat, neither had he any time for reflection on the best method of defence or escape. As he had no arms or other weapons of defence, the first impulse, in this truly fearful position, unfortunately perhaps, was to spring into a small tree near by; but he had scarcely ascended his length when the desperate creature, probably rendered still more fierce by the promptings of hunger, sprang upon and seized him by the heel. Smith, however, after having his foot badly bitten, disengaged it from the shoe, which was firmly clinched in the creature's teeth, and let him drop. The moment he was disengaged, Smith sprang for a more secure position, and the animal at the same time leaped to another large tree, about ten feet distant, up which he ascended to an elevation equal to that of his victim, from which he threw himself upon him, firmly fixing his teeth in the calf of his leg. Hanging suspended thus until the flesh, insufficient to sustain the weight, gave way, he dropped again to the ground, carrying a portion of flesh in his mouth. Having greedily devoured this morsel, he bounded again up the opposite tree, and from thence upon Smith, in this manner renewing his attacks, and tearing away the flesh in mouthfuls from his legs. During this agonising operation, Smith contrived to cut a limb from the tree, to which he managed to bind his jack-knife, with which he could now assail his enemy at every leap. He succeeded thus in wounding him so badly that at length his attacks were discontinued, and he finally disappeared in the dense forest. During the encounter, Smith had exerted his voice to the utmost to alarm the crew, who he hoped might be within hail. He was heard, and in a short time several of the crew reached the place, but not in time to save him from the dreadful encounter. The sight was truly appalling. His garments were not only rent from him, but the flesh literally torn from his legs, exposing even the bone and sinews. It was with the greatest difficulty he made the descent of the tree. Exhausted through loss of blood, and overcome by fright and exertion, he sank upon the ground and immediately fainted; but the application of snow restored him to consciousness. Preparing a litter from poles and boughs, they conveyed him to the camp, washed and dressed his wounds as well as circumstances would allow, and, as soon as possible, removed him to the settlement, where medical aid was secured. After a protracted period

of confinement, he gradually recovered from his wounds, though still carrying terrible scars, and sustaining irreparable injury. Such desperate encounters are, however, of rare occurrence, though collisions less sanguinary are not unrequent.

BEATRICE TO DANTE.

'Guardami ben. Ben son, ben son!'

'REGARD me well; I am thy love—thy love;
Thy blessing—thy delight—thy hope—thy peace:
Thy joy above all joys that break and cease
When their full waves in widest circle move:
Thy bird of comfort—thine immortal dove,
Whom thou let'st forth out of thy griev'd breast
To flutter back and point a place of rest:
Thine angel who forgets her crown star-wove,
And comes to thee with folded woman-hands,
Pleading: 'Look on me well—thy love, that stands
Before thee; 'midst the Triune Light divine
Undazzled, still discerns thy human face,
And is more happy in this happy place—
That thou alone art hers, and she is thine.'

DANTE TO BEATRICE.

I SEE thee, gliding towards me with slow pace
Across the azure fields of Paradise,
Where thine each footstep makes a star arise:
So, from this heart's once void but infinite space
Each angel-touch of thine, by God's dear grace,
Struck out some fiery and eternal spark
To light the world, though all my heaven lay dark.
O Beatrice! cypresses inlaid
My laurels; none have grown save tear-bedewed—
Heart-tears, that sunk into the earth unviewed,
And sprung up green to form this crown of bays.
Take it! At thy dear feet I lay my all,
What men my honours, virtues, glories, call:
I lived, loved, suffered, sung—for thy sole praise!

* Suggested by a marble figure of Beatrice, bearing this motto on the pedestal.

BUMPER.

This name for a full glass of wine is said to be a corruption of *au bon père*, which was the first toast given when men sat down to drink in Catholic times, and was either meant as a compliment to the priest of the parish or the pope; but in some of the midland counties anything large—a pear, plum, a fish, an apple—is called 'a bumper.' A large country girl is a bumping lass—a large-limbed, coarse rustic a bumpkin. Dr Johnson deduces bumper from bump; others say it is a corruption of *bombard-bombard*, in Latin *bombardum*—a great gun, and from thence applied to a large stoup or flagon or a full glass. Thus in *Henry VIII.*, act i. scene 7, the second chamberlain says to the porters who had been negligent in keeping out the mob:

'You are lazy knaves;
And here ye lie baiting of bumpers, when
Ye should do service.'

baiting of bumpard being a court-term for sitting and drinking. Again in *The Tempest*, act ii. scene 2:

'Yond' some black cloud, yon' huge one
Looks like a foul bombard that would shed his liquor.'

and Mr Theobald explains it—'a large vessel for holding drink, as well as the piece of ordnance so called.'

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